



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 06 April 2007

Current
Nationwide
Threat Level is

ELEVATED
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS

[For info click here](http://www.dhs.gov/)

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Daily Highlights

- The Washington Post reports thousands of taxpayers could be at risk of identity theft or other financial fraud because the Internal Revenue Service has failed to adequately protect information on its 52,000 laptop computers and other storage systems. (See item [12](#))
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator R. David Paulison highlighted reforms and improvements that his agency has implemented to prepare for the 2007 Hurricane Season in his keynote address during the opening session of the 29th National Hurricane Conference. (See item [30](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report *Fast Jump*

Production Industries: [Energy](#); [Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *April 05, Bloomberg* — **Total, Shell chiefs say 'easy oil' gone, supply targets tough.** The days of so-called "easy oil" are over, making it harder to meet supply targets without complicated and expensive projects, the heads of two of Europe's largest oil companies said Thursday, April 5. The International Energy Agency estimates oil supplies will have to rise 39 percent to 116 million barrels of oil a day by 2030 from about 84 million barrels a day in 2005 to meet demand. Meeting such targets with conventional oil sources will be "extremely difficult," Christophe de Margerie of Total SA said. New supply will be based on "huge

high-tech" projects. Jeroen van der Veer of Royal Dutch Shell said countries no longer ask for Shell's help with conventional reserves, such as oil or gas fields found onshore that are cheaper to develop than offshore fields. Explorers are pushing further offshore as technology improves and fields onshore and in shallow water run dry. Lehman Brothers Holdings says oil companies are expected to boost exploration spending by nine percent worldwide this year. South Africa's Sasol is slated to begin its first shipment of synthetic diesel made from Qatari natural gas. Shell has begun a larger gas-to-liquids project called Pearl, which aims to pump 140,000 barrels a day.

Source: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601072&sid=aH57.uZe.sAI&refer=energy>

2. *April 05, Associated Press* — **TXU threatens plant shutdowns over penalty.** TXU Corp. said it could be forced to shut down some of its power plants if it can't come to terms with the state Public Utility Commission over charges that the power company manipulated the wholesale market. Mike McCall, chief executive of TXU's wholesale division, wrote to the commission that its proposed penalty of \$210 million raises doubt that the utility could afford to operate older natural gas plants. TXU, the largest power generator in Texas, rejects the commission's accusations that it manipulated the Texas electric market in 2005 by selling power to the market at inflated prices and causing electricity prices to rise 15.5 percent during a four-month summer stretch. TXU met with commission staff members on Wednesday, April 4, to discuss an alternative to shutting down plants: a mitigation plan that sets guidelines for how the company would operate in the wholesale market. If approved by the commission, the plan would protect the company from future charges of market manipulation. McCall didn't say which plants or how many TXU might close. He said they would be natural gas plants that are turned on only occasionally to supplement the state's electric grid when power demands rise unexpectedly.

Source: <http://www.ohio.com/mld/ohio/business/technology/17030951.ht m>

3. *April 05, Associated Press* — **Spring snow dumps on upper Northeast.** A spring storm brought more than a foot of snow to parts of the upper Northeast, closing schools, tangling traffic and knocking out power to more than 100,000 homes and businesses on Thursday, April 5. The wintry weather is expected to continue through the weekend. Utility crews worked through the night and into Thursday trying to restore electricity to more than 80,000 homes and businesses in New Hampshire after the snow took down tree limbs and power lines. Damage was widespread, and there was no estimate of when electricity might be restored, said Martin Murray, spokesperson for Public Service Company of New Hampshire. Central Maine Power reported that more than 24,000 customers without electricity, mainly in the Alfred area, and Vermont had about 1,300 outages.

Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070405/ap_on_re_us/spring_storm

4. *April 04, Electric Light & Power* — **Nuclear power 'renaissance' moving beyond talk to real action: CERA.** Governments and businesses around the globe have moved beyond talking to real action to renew development of nuclear power, and have created "good prospects for a major nuclear expansion over the coming decades," according to a new analysis by Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA). "Over the past few years, high fossil fuel prices, energy security and climate change concerns and increasing urgency about reducing greenhouse gas emissions have all converged to improve the position of nuclear power relative to other

options," CERA senior director Jone-Lin Wang and associate director Christopher J. Hansen write in the new report "Is the 'Nuclear Renaissance' Real?" In the U.S., where no new reactor has been ordered in 28 years, these trends, plus excellent performance of the existing nuclear fleet and financial incentives in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, have led to a race to develop new nuclear power reactors, said the study. In Asia, where the building of new nuclear plants never stopped, several countries have recently upped their target for new nuclear capacity. In Western Europe, a new reactor is under construction for the first time in more than a decade; a second one is not far behind.

Source: http://uaelp.pennnet.com/display_article/289020/22/ARTCL/non e/none/Nuclear-power-

5. *April 04, Department of Energy* — **DOE does not accept initial SPR bids.** The Department of Energy's Office of Fossil Energy Wednesday, April 4, said that it had reviewed, and deemed unacceptable, the bids that it had received in response to a solicitation to purchase up to four million barrels of crude oil for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR). The Office of Fossil Energy determined that the bids were too high. In keeping with Secretary Bodman's commitment to fill the SPR in a deliberate, predictable, and transparent manner, consistent with the Department's updated guidelines that were announced in November 2006, the Office of Fossil Energy will issue another solicitation for bids in mid-April. This is the first of a series of solicitations planned to replace 11 million barrels of oil sold in the fall of 2005 after Hurricane Katrina disrupted refinery supplies. This would be the first direct purchase of crude oil for the reserve since 1994. Through the terms of contracts to be issued from the planned series of solicitations, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve seeks to achieve a moderate fill rate of approximately 100,000 barrels per day over the course of a few months.

Source: <http://www.energy.gov/news/4925.htm>

6. *April 04, Reuters* — **Some Colorado stations short on gasoline.** Leading U.S. refiner Valero Energy Corp. said on Wednesday, April 4, it hopes spot shortages at Colorado gasoline stations will end as it boosts supply while returning a shut Texas refinery to production. Several Diamond Shamrock stations in Denver and Colorado Springs supplied by Valero ran out of gasoline in the past two weeks because of the shut refinery. A spokesperson for AAA Colorado reassured Colorado drivers that the spot shortages were confined to some stations using the Diamond Shamrock brand name in Denver and Colorado Springs. Valero's 170,000 barrel per day refinery in Sunray, TX, was shut by a February 16 fire and the company expects to restore partial production in the first half of this month. In addition to Colorado, the Sunray refinery supplies gasoline to Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.

Source: http://today.reuters.com/news/articleinvesting.aspx?type=bon dsNews&storyID=2007-04-04T134404Z_01_N04337904_RTRIDST_0_COL RADO-GASOLINE-UPDATE-1.XML

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Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials Sector

7. *April 05, Macomb Daily (MI)* — **Fire forces evacuation of plastics plant.** A fire at a Chesterfield Township, MI, industrial plant Wednesday night, April 4, ignited several propane tanks, which caused numerous explosions. No injuries were reported in the incident at

Continental Plastics, a major automotive supplier, near the area of 21 Mile and Interstate 94, but authorities did close the immediate area to motorists. "We have propane tanks exploding so we had to shut down the road for the safety of the public," said police Sgt. James O'Connor. Police also blocked motorists from exiting the freeway onto 21 Mile because exploding debris could have struck passing cars.

Source: http://www.macombdaily.com/stories/040507/loc_fire001.shtml

8. *April 05, Anchorage Daily News (AK)* — **Fire destroys highway gas station.** Firefighters and Alaska state troopers evacuated homes and businesses within a quarter-mile radius after a gas station caught fire in Tok on Tuesday, April 3. Firefighters and troopers were called to the Wadsworth Texaco and Auto Repair at Mile 1313.9 of the Alaska Highway. Because of the large amounts of fuel and other flammable items, several hundred bystanders were cleared from the area. Traffic on the Alaska Highway was also redirected for about two hours. Investigators believe the fire may have started from an electrical short.

Source: <http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/rural/story/8766768p-8668292c.html>

9. *April 04, Herald & Review (IL)* — **Lightning strike sparks Macon fertilizer plant fire.** A lightning strike was blamed Tuesday, April 3, for the fire that destroyed the Evergreen FS fertilizer plant in Macon, IL, causing an estimated \$500,000 in damage. Firefighters were putting lime all the way around the facility to contain any chemical leakage and were creating dikes in nearby ditches. The fire cut off access to the Meridian School District's buses, and substitute vehicles had to be brought from Springfield to take students home. Sheriff's Lt. Tom Schneider said early in the fire, deputies closed U.S. 51 at Elwin because of concern for a possible explosion from chemical tanks and propane at the plant. He said FS personnel indicated the potash and fertilizers at the facility were nontoxic when burned. Deputies also closed Macon County Highway 32 at Macon, Gabriel Road southbound at Woodcock Road and Ruby Street at Woodcock Road.

Source: http://www.herald-review.com/articles/2007/04/04/news/local_news/1022464.txt

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

10. *April 04, Daily Press (VA)* — **Navy chief pushes for shipbuilding overhaul.** Navy Secretary Donald Winter urged an overhaul of Navy shipbuilding practices Tuesday, April 3, saying the current system "is simply not meeting our expectations." After completing his first year as the Navy's civilian leader, Winter used an appearance before hundreds of contractors to press the case for reforms that he said would better control costs and rebuild a dwindling fleet. "We have to be ready and willing to make some real significant changes," he told reporters at a later news conference. For too long, he said, the Navy has routinely underestimated the costs of building ships while giving wide latitude to contractors -- who have little competition -- to control the design and construction process. Among the needed reforms, Winter said, are independent cost estimates, more knowledgeable program oversight and a willingness by shipbuilders to invest in their yards for the long term.

Source: <http://www.dailypress.com/business/local/dp-98117sy0apr04.0.713894.story?coll=dp-business-localheads>

Banking and Finance Sector

11. *April 05, CNET News* — **University of California at San Francisco probes possible data breach.** A possible computer security breach at the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) may have put 46,000 campus and medical center faculty, staff and students at risk of identity fraud. Personal information, including names, Social Security numbers and bank account numbers used for electronic payroll and reimbursement deposits may have been released from a server located at a University of California data center in Oakland, CA, UCSF said in a statement Wednesday, April 4. The incident was identified late last month and the server in question was taken offline, UCSF said. No patient information was stored on the system, it said. "There is no specific evidence that data on this server were accessed inappropriately, but we cannot rule out such access," the university said on its Website. UCSF has alerted the affected people, urging them to look for signs of identity fraud and suggesting they place a fraud alert on their credit reports.

Source: http://news.com.com/UCSF+probes+possible+data+breach/2100-1029_3-6173453.html?tag=cd.top

12. *April 05, Washington Post* — **IRS found lax in protecting taxpayer data.** Thousands of taxpayers could be at risk of identity theft or other financial fraud because the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has failed to adequately protect information on its 52,000 laptop computers and other storage systems, a new government report concludes. The IRS did not begin to adequately correct the security problems until the second half of 2006, despite being warned about them in 2003 and again in February 2006, according to a report by the inspector general of the IRS, J. Russell George. Nearly 500 IRS laptops were lost or stolen during that three and one-half year period, many from the homes or cars of IRS workers but a significant number — 111 — from IRS offices, the report found. The IRS says one laptop typically contains information on 10 to 25 tax cases. Although the missing laptops could not be examined, the inspector general's staff tested 100 laptops currently used by IRS employees and found 44 had "unencrypted sensitive data, including taxpayer data and employee personnel data," leading investigators to conclude "it is very likely a large number of the lost or stolen IRS computers contained similar unencrypted data." No report of identity theft has been linked to the missing laptops, and no taxpayers have been alerted to the potential security breaches, IRS officials say. The report attributes the newly identified shortcomings at IRS offices "to a lack of emphasis by management."

Inspector General Report: <http://www.treas.gov/tigta/auditreports/2007reports/200720048fr.pdf>

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/04/AR2007040402603.html>

13. *April 05, Associated Press* — **Retail trade, FBI fight organized theft.** Two leading retail industry associations have teamed up with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to create a national online database that will allow merchants to share information to fight organized retail theft. The database, scheduled to debut Monday, April 9, with 40 retailers, consolidates efforts made by the National Retail Federation (NRF) and the Retail Industry Leaders Association.

Both organizations had launched their own password-protected online national crime data bases last year. Previously, merchants had never shared information, so organized rings could hit various stores in one area without being detected. Joseph LaRocca, NRF's vice president of loss prevention, said that this database called Law Enforcement Retail Partnership Network will become the "national platform" for sharing retail crime information. In a statement, FBI Supervisory Special Agent Brian Nadeau, program manager for the FBI's Organized Retail Theft program, said that this tool "will create a stronger partnership between retailers and law enforcement to tackle a growing problem and disrupt criminal organizations." NRF, the industry's largest trade group, estimates that shoppers pay almost two cents on every dollar to cover the cost of retail theft.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/technology/AP-Retail-Crime-D ata-Base.html? r=1&oref=slogin>

14. *April 05, ABC News* — **FBI agent killed in New Jersey bank shootout.** An FBI agent was killed in a shootout Thursday, April 5, while investigating a string of bank robberies in central New Jersey. The agent, whose name was being withheld pending family notification, was killed in Readington, NJ. Two suspects have been captured and an additional suspect remains at large, according to law enforcement officials. The agent was ambushed while tailing a crew of bank robbers, one official said. A gunfight ensued in the parking lot of the Arvins Garden Center on Route 22, across the street from the bank. According to FBI sources, the agent was killed while conducting surveillance on the suspects. The shooting stemmed from a stakeout of the PNC Bank in the Whitehouse section of Readington, just before 11:30 a.m. EDT. Authorities were looking for the third man, who had allegedly been seen with two red bags. According to officials, the wanted suspect had lost one shoe. Police were searching the area and closed Route 22 in the vicinity of the search. The agent was part of a squad that had been investigating a string of violent robbers who have pulled off a number of bank jobs in Middlesex and Monmouth Counties.

Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=3012141&page=1>

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Transportation and Border Security Sector

15. *April 05, Associated Press* — **Cruise ship with 1,200 aboard evacuated in Greece.** A cruise ship carrying nearly 1,200 passengers, most of them Americans, and some 400 crew members was evacuated off the Greek island of Santorini on Thursday, April 5, after striking rocks, authorities said. The Greek-flagged Sea Diamond apparently was listing near the island's main port, the Merchant Marine Ministry said. Images of the vessel also were seen on island Internet Web cameras and cell phone video footage shown on Greek television. Some passengers were transferred to a small ferry, after most people on board the cruise ship were safely evacuated, Merchant Marine Minister Manolis Kefaloyiannis said.

Source: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/04/05/europe/web0504-greece .php>

16. *April 05, Department of Transportation* — **Department of Transportation announces a life-saving technology.** In a move that could ultimately save up to 10,000 lives each year on U.S. roadways, the nation's top transportation official on Thursday, April 5, announced plans to make new crash prevention technology standard equipment on every new passenger vehicle

sold in America by 2012. Department of Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters and National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator Nicole R. Nason announced the final rule to require the Electronic Stability Control (ESC) on all new passenger vehicles during a tour with auto makers at the New York International Auto Show today. ESC uses automatic computer controlled braking to keep drivers from losing control on slippery roads or in emergency maneuvers, in many cases preventing deadly rollovers from occurring. The final rule will require all manufacturers to begin equipping passenger vehicles with ESC starting with model year 2009, and to have the feature available as standard equipment on all new passenger vehicles by the 2012 model year (September 2011). The agency estimates ESC will save between 5,300 and 9,600 lives annually and prevent between 168,000 and 238,000 injuries. The estimated average cost of ESC is approximately \$111 per vehicle, assuming the model already features ABS brakes.

The final regulation and the accompanying regulatory analysis:

<http://www.safercar.gov/esc/Rule.pdf>

Additional information on the ESC technology:

<http://nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.012c081c5966f0ca3253ab10cba046a0/>

Source: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/dot3707.htm>

17. *April 05, Minneapolis /St. Paul Business Journal* — Northwest partner receives FAA

approval on new plane. Chantilly, VA–based Compass Airlines, the new regional partner of Northwest, announced Thursday, April 5, that it has received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification to begin commercial passenger operations using a new aircraft for flights between Minneapolis and Washington, DC. Compass said it has also received the necessary Department of Transportation approvals for commercial passenger service using a 50–seat CRJ200 regional jet aircraft between Minneapolis/St. Paul and Dulles International Airport, near Washington, DC, and it expects to begin operations in May. Compass Airlines is a wholly owned subsidiary of Eagan, MN–based Northwest Airlines Corporation.

Source: <http://biz.yahoo.com/bizj/070405/1442951.html?.v=1>

18. *April 04, WUSA9 News (DC)* — Inspection set for DC bridges after concrete falls on car.

On Wednesday morning, April 4, a piece of concrete fell from the deck of the L'Enfant Plaza bridge over the Southwest Freeway in Washington, DC. It put a hole in the windshield of one car but no one was hurt. Officials say a vehicle being hit by debris from a bridge in DC is unusual. But 9NEWS NOW saw evidence that other debris had fallen from that overpass and the 9th Street bridge over the Southwest Freeway. Transportation spokesperson Erik Linden says all 241 bridges and overpasses in the District will be inspected to make sure there are no other problems of falling debris. Because of the ongoing issues at the L'Enfant Plaza overpass, that bridge was already scheduled for repair.

Source: http://www.wusa9.com/news/news_article.aspx?storyid=57221

19. *April 04, Associated Press* — Global airline business expected to turn profit after six losing

years. After six years of losing money, the global airline business is expected to be profitable in 2007, a top aviation official said Wednesday, April 4, and Asia will spearhead the industry's future growth. By 2010, Asia will become the world's largest aviation market, accounting for one–third of the world's air traffic, said Giovanni Bisignani, the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) director general and chief executive. Bisignani said the Geneva–based IATA, the governing body that regulates international air transport, expects the global airline

industry to make a combined net profit of \$3.8 billion this year. The industry had suffered six years of losses, amounting to more than \$40 billion over that time, as airlines were hit a lull in travel after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, high jet fuel prices and health scares like SARS. European airlines would account for \$2.4 billion of the group's profit forecast, while Asia-Pacific airlines would make up \$1.7 billion. The profit is largely due to higher traffic. But North American airlines would likely lose a combined \$600 million this year, the group said, citing high restructuring costs. Bisignani also called for better use of technology to simplify passenger travel and improve air traffic management including biometrics for immigration processing.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2007-04-04-global-air-line-profits_N.htm

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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Agriculture Sector

20. *April 05, Agricultural Research Service* — Genes foil Hessian flies' feeding on wheat.

Resistant wheat varieties are known to stress Hessian fly (*Mayetiola destructor*) larvae to death within six days. How this happens is a mystery researchers need to solve to better control the most destructive pest of wheat worldwide. The recent identification by Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists and cooperators of six antioxidant genes in Hessian fly larvae is a step toward solving this mystery. The antioxidants produced by these genes help prevent oxidative damage to the larvae's cell membranes from peroxides, which can be produced both by the wheat plant and by the stresses the larvae suffer. Rich Shukle, an entomologist in the ARS Crop Production and Pest Control Research Unit at West Lafayette, IN, and Purdue University entomologists Omprakash Mittapalli and Jonathan Neal identified these genes. They found that the genes produce more antioxidants in larvae trying to feed on resistant wheat plants than in larvae feeding on non-resistant wheat plants. The increase in protective antioxidants is an indicator of stress, and too great a level of stress may kill the larvae.

Source: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/News/docs.htm?docid=1261>

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Food Sector

21. *April 05, Associated Press* — Mad-cow testing extended. The only mad-cow testing laboratory in the Pacific Northwest will remain open for six more months. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) contract for testing at Washington State University's (WSU) College of Veterinary Medicine expired March 1 as part of the agency's efforts to scale back monitoring for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), also known as mad-cow disease. The USDA has extended the contract through September 30, with the option for further extensions, WSU officials said Wednesday, April 4.

Source: http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2003652250_madcow05m.html

22. *April 05, RIA Novosti (Russia)* — **Russia bans poultry imports from West Virginia.** Russia's food safety watchdog said Thursday, April 5, it has imposed a temporary ban on imports of poultry products from West Virginia, starting April 6. "Due to an outbreak of bird flu virus containing H5N2 strains registered in the U.S. state of West Virginia, Rosselkhoznadzor is introducing temporary restrictions on imports of poultry products, feed—stuff and feed supplements from this state," said Alexei Alekseyenko, a spokesperson for the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection. The official said that restrictions will apply for poultry produced after March 31.
Source: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20070405/63158745.html>

23. *April 04, Associated Press* — **Food poison victims in Los Angeles infected with same strain of E. coli.** Seven people who fell ill after dining at a Souplantation restaurant last month were sickened by the same strain of E. coli, Orange County, CA, health officials said Wednesday, April 4. Test results indicated there was a common source of infection for the seven who tested positive for the dangerous bacterium, said Howard Sutter, spokesperson for the county's Health Care Agency. He said investigators were still trying to figure out what everyone ate to determine the contamination source. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the California Department of Health Services were also involved in the investigation, Sutter said. All seven were at the Souplantation in Lake Forest either on March 23 or March 24. Souplantations are serve-yourself, salad–buffet restaurants.
Source: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/state/20070404-2202-ca-e.colioutbreak.html>

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Water Sector

24. *April 03, San Bernardino County Sun (CA)* — **Shutdown affects one million in California.** One million customers in California's Inland Empire will be asked to cut back on their water use after officials discovered severe damage in a section of a major water pipeline. The shutdown of the Rialto Feeder pipeline, which provides imported Northern California water to nine Inland Empire cities, will last nine days, from April 16 to 24. During the repairs, water officials are urging residents to suspend outdoor watering and cut back on indoor water use. The pipeline shutdown will affect customers in Chino, Chino Hills, Claremont, Fontana, La Verne, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga and Upland. Two months ago the pipeline was shut down for repairs, and residents were asked to conserve water for one week. During the repair process, water officials conducted a routine inspection of the line. Officials discovered there was severe damage to a section of the pipeline. The damaged section of the eight–foot–diameter pipeline had breaks in 85 stress wires — about half of the total in the line — which, along with several other components, make up its support structure.
Source: http://www.sbsun.com/news/ci_5580667
25. *April 03, Fort Worth Star–Telegram (TX)* — **Toxic gas a threat.** Water utilities in Dallas–Fort Worth, TX, receive more railcar shipments of toxic chlorine gas than anywhere in the country, according to a new report that concludes these shipments are inviting targets for terrorists.

Nearly 10 million people, from Fort Worth to Carrollton, could be affected by a railcar leak of chlorine, according to a national survey of 62 water and wastewater treatment plants released Monday, April 2, by the Center for American Progress, which describes itself as a "progressive" nonprofit think tank. A Star–Telegram review of federal Risk Management Plans showed that chlorine — whether stored on-site or shipped in via railcar or tanker truck — is by far the biggest toxic threat in the region. The worst case scenario in the report for Tarrant County is a chlorine leak at the Tarrant County Water Supply Project plant in Euless. Such a leak would release 34,400 pounds of chlorine gas, which would form a cloud traveling close to the ground as far as 12 miles and place 1.1 million people at risk. About 100 plants nationwide store enough chlorine or other chemicals to harm at least 100,000 people, according to federal records. Texas is home to 23 of them.

Report: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/04/pdf/chemical_security_report.pdf

Source: <http://www.star-telegram.com/229/story/56522.html>

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Public Health Sector

26. *April 05, Nature* — **Antibiotic interactions that select against resistance.** Multidrug combinations are increasingly important in combating the spread of antibiotic–resistance in bacterial pathogens. On a broader scale, such combinations are also important in understanding microbial ecology and evolution. Although the effects of multidrug combinations on bacterial growth have been studied extensively, relatively little is known about their impact on the differential selection between sensitive and resistant bacterial populations. Normally, the presence of a drug confers an advantage on its resistant mutants in competition with the sensitive wild–type population. Researchers showed by using a direct competition assay between doxycycline–resistant and doxycycline–sensitive *Escherichia coli*, that this differential selection can be inverted in a hyper–antagonistic class of drug combinations. Used in such a combination, a drug can render the combined treatment selective against the drug's own resistance allele. Further, this inversion of selection seems largely insensitive to the underlying resistance mechanism and occurs, at sublethal concentrations, while maintaining inhibition of the wild type. These findings demonstrate a previously unappreciated feature of the fitness landscape for the evolution of resistance and point to a trade–off between the effect of drug interactions on absolute potency and the relative competitive selection that they impose on emerging resistant populations.

Source: <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v446/n7136/full/nature05685.html>

27. *April 05, Agence France–Presse* — **Young girl latest Indonesia bird flu case.** A teenage girl in Indonesia is infected with the H5N1 bird flu virus, becoming the 93rd confirmed case in the country worst hit by the disease, a health official said Thursday, April 3. The 15–year–old lives in the country's capital, Jakarta, and is in intensive care in one of the city's hospitals, a spokesperson from Indonesia's bird flu information center said. Meanwhile a 29–year–old man died Wednesday, April 4, in Solo after showing bird flu symptoms, said Refiono, a doctor from the hospital that treated him. Solo lies about 300 miles from the capital.

Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20070405/hl_afp/healthfluindonesia_070405172547;_ylt=ArrvMoXUXFBVmy2oeK6jdkWJOrgF

28. *April 05, Emerging Infectious Diseases* — **Respirator donning in post–hurricane New Orleans.** Researchers evaluated correctness of N95 FF respirator donning by the public in post–hurricane New Orleans, LA, where respirators were recommended for mold remediation. Researchers randomly selected, interviewed, and observed 538 participants, using multiple logistic regression for analysis. Only 129 (24 percent) participants demonstrated proper donning. Errors included nose clip not tightened (71 percent) and straps incorrectly placed (52 percent); 22 percent put on the respirator upside down. Factors independently associated with proper donning were as follows: ever having used a mask or respirator; ever having had a respirator fit test; being male; Caucasian race; having a certified respirator; and having participated in mold clean–up. Interventions to improve respirator donning should be considered in planning for influenza epidemics and disasters.
Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/eid/content/13/5/06–1490.htm>

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Government Sector

29. *April 05, Government Accountability Office* — **GAO–07–686R: DHS Multi–Agency Operation Centers Would Benefit from Taking Further Steps to Enhance Collaboration and Coordination (Correspondence).** This letter addresses the conference report to H.R. 5441 and Senate Report 109–273, which directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to (1) analyze the role of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) National Operations Center and DHS component operations centers and (2) make recommendations regarding the operation and coordination of these centers. On March 1 and 13, 2007, GAO met with House and Senate Committee staff, respectively, to brief them on completed and ongoing GAO work that addresses these issues (see encl.). Both House and Senate staff agreed that this information addresses the appropriations mandates and their related concerns regarding DHS’s operations centers. GAO primarily relied on a prior GAO report on DHS multi–agency operations centers to satisfy these mandates. In this completed review, GAO specifically examined (1) the missions, products, functions, and customers of the multi–agency DHS operations centers that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year (24/7/365), and (2) DHS’s implementation of key practices for enhancing and sustaining collaboration at these multi–agency centers. This letter and the accompanying enclosure transmit the information provided during those briefings to House and Senate staff.
Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO–07–686R>

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Emergency Services Sector

30. *April 04, Federal Emergency Management Agency* — **FEMA prepares for 2007 hurricane season; Administrator Paulison stresses preparedness.** The Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator R. David Paulison Wednesday, April 4, highlighted reforms and improvements FEMA has implemented to prepare for the 2007 Hurricane Season during his keynote address during the opening session of the 29th National Hurricane Conference. In his speech, Paulison noted the many reforms FEMA

has already implemented in the areas of communications and disaster operations; disaster assistance and reducing the potential for waste, fraud and abuse; logistics management; and operational planning and continuity. Paulison focused on the internal and external reviews being conducted in partnership with states and localities to determine where reforms can make the biggest impact. "FEMA is working closely with each of the 11 state emergency management communities in hurricane prone states, using a consistent set of measures and tools to evaluate strengths and vulnerabilities," said Paulison, "This will allow us to better tailor our response. Paulison also highlighted the personnel changes at FEMA that included recruitment of additional staff to bring FEMA's staffing level to over 90 percent.

Source: <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=35275>

31. *April 04, Associated Press* — **Health officials celebrate opening of emergency center.** Little Rock, AK, health officials have celebrated the opening of a new emergency operations center that they say will keep the state connected with federal and local agencies during disasters. Governor Beebe and federal health officials marked the opening of the center Wednesday, April 4, though it has been up and running since January. Health Division Director Paul Halverson said the facility provides the opportunity for instant communication and coordination of resources, resulting in the best intelligence and the optimum in decision-making during a disaster. Halverson said the center has already been used to coordinate efforts after a tornado in Dumas and after a gasoline spill in northwest Arkansas. It includes videoconferencing equipment and satellite phone service.

Source: <http://www.wmcstations.com/Global/story.asp?S=6327918>

32. *April 04, Associated Press* — **State unveils new component for emergencies.** State officials on Tuesday, April 3, unveiled a mobile communications and command unit that will be available to assist local responders throughout Oklahoma during emergency situations. The command unit is designed to be used when multiple law enforcement agencies are involved in responding to a situation, as it will be able to bridge the radio communication systems used by the different agencies, said Kevin Ward, commissioner of the state Department of Public Safety. The unit will be operated by a team of between four and six people that includes representatives from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management and the Oklahoma Military Department.

Source: <http://www.examiner-enterprise.com/articles/2007/04/04/news/state/news611.txt>

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Information Technology and Telecommunications Sector

33. *April 04, Computerworld* — **Hackers now offer subscription services, support for their malware.** As organized gangs increasingly turn to cybercrime, Websites that sell malicious code are coming to represent the new face of malware development and distribution. Unlike malicious code writers of the past who tended to distribute their code to a tight group of insiders or in underground newsgroups, the new breed is far more professional about how it sells its wares, security researchers said. In return for downloading the malware to their sites, Website owners are promised at least \$66 every Monday, with the potential for even more for "clean installs" of the malicious code on end user systems. The exploit code is usually encrypted and uses a range of morphing techniques to evade detection by security software. It is designed to

use various vulnerabilities to try to infect a target system. And many exploit providers simply wait for Microsoft Corp.'s monthly patches, which they then reverse-engineer to develop new exploit code against the disclosed vulnerabilities, said Gunter Ollmann, director of security strategies at IBM's Internet Security Systems X-Force team.

Source: http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9015588&intsrc=hm_list

34. *April 04, IDG News Service* — **Researchers have discovered a faster way to crack the Wi-Fi security protocol.** Three German security researchers have discovered a faster way to crack the Wi-Fi security protocol WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy). They plan to demonstrate their findings at a security conference in Hamburg this weekend. It takes just 3 seconds to extract a 104-bit WEP key from intercepted data using a 1.7GHz Pentium M processor. The necessary data can be captured in less than a minute, and the attack requires so much less computing power than previous attacks that it could even be performed in real time by someone walking through an office. "We think this can even be done with some PDAs or mobile phones, if they are equipped with wireless LAN hardware," said Erik Tews, a researcher in the computer science department at Darmstadt University of Technology in Darmstadt, Germany. Paper: <http://eprint.iacr.org/2007/120.pdf>
Source: http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/04/04/HNdontusewep_1.htm

Internet Alert Dashboard

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